



## OPTIMIZATION POSSIBILITIES OF SOCIAL SERVICES ASSESSMENT SYSTEM IN LITHUANIA

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**Purpose.** To analyze and to give an overview of social services assessment system in Lithuania and to submit proposals for optimization and development of social services assessment system, in purpose to achieve social and economic conversation under condition of globalization.

**Design/methodology/approach** – Research methodology is based on neoliberal doctrine, rational choice theory and public choice theory, social marketing theory and social constructivism as well as systems theory. The main applied empirical method is *documentary research*. During the research, both external document analysis, i.e. assessment of document occurrence conditions, and internal document analysis, i.e. document content analysis, were carried out. The research was conducted by examining primary sources, i.e. legal acts, strategic documents, official speeches as well as by interpreting practical actions. The analysis of research literature and comparative historical and other methods were also used.

**Findings.**(1) An important part of the management of social services is social services assessment, which leads to opportunities to improve social services. (2) Social services assessment system in Lithuania is still in its establishment phase and could be improved. (3) Concept of social services quality and criteria of social services quality are not clearly identified and defined. Social care services assessment is performed only at the rate (norm) matching aspect (structural - production or objective quality). (4) General social services and social care services assessment is performed fragmentally in Lithuania. There is not prepared unified evaluation methodology or general evaluation criteria in municipalities, which could allow to analyze and to compare the assessment data. (5) Integral and optimal social services assessment system, which includes objective and subjective parts of assessment system, as well as macro, meso and micro levels, is one of

the conditions for equivalent social development and social services improvement opportunities.

**Research limitations/implications** – The research was limited by the lack of official documentary sources and data, severe data comparability, domain specificity.

**Practical implications** – The Study provides the opportunity to assess the social services evaluation system evolution and provides practical recommendations for optimization and development of social services assessment system in Lithuania.

**Originality/Value.** Due social care sector extent and its influence on the quality of societal life, as well due state budget funds, which are located for social security, optimization of social services, as the opportunity for state budget revenue and expenditure rationalization and for individual members of the society quality of life, becomes very relevant. When neoliberal ideas are dominating in social services, when market economy mechanisms are gradually gaining and when privatization is increasing, more and more attention is given to rationalization and efficiency of social services. The decrease of the State regulation volume and the entrenchment of market conditions on the one hand promote competition between service providers, as well efficiency and economy of services, on the other hand, give new conditions for provision of services and their assessment, and for change of the government's role in these processes. Social services assessment in Lithuania was analyzed fragmentally. It was done by exploring the quality level of social services and by researching social services content and financing models. However social services assessment, as the integral part of social services management, was studied not in sufficient detail. It perceived lack of research, which are exploring optimization possibilities of social services assessment system and efficiency improvements of social services in real *time*.

**Keywords** : social services, provision of services, performance measurement, quality;

**Research type** : literature review.